

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 AID-05 FBO-02 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 A-01 PRS-01 H-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00

EB-07 COME-00 OPIC-03 EUR-12 /075 W

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P 181342Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8511

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 0861

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, DM, US

SUBJ: US-BENIN RELATIONS: REPLY TO LATEST GPRB NOTE

REF (A) STATE 119077, (B) COTONOU 824, (C) COTONOU 799,

1. DELIVERED NOTE CONTAINED REF A MAY 18 TO FORNMIN DIRGEN LEONARD ADJIN. WHEN I HANDED HIM THE NOTE HE ASKED IF THIS WAS "THE GIFT" (PRESUMABLY MEANING THE EXTENSION OF THE BRIDGE DEADLINE). I SUGGESTED HE READ THE NOTE FIRST, WHICH HE DID. I THEN NOTED THAT CONCERNING THE BRIDGE DEADLINE, WE HAD STOPPED THE CLOCK AT MIDNIGHT MAY 14. I DID NOT KNOW HOW LONG IT COULD BE KEPT STOPPED AND THEREFORE HOPED THAT WE COULD HAVE THE MINISTRY'S POSITIVE REPLY TO OUR NOTE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

2. ADJIN'S FACIAL EXPRESSION TURNED FROM SMILES TO OPEN ANNOYANCE IF NOT OUTRIGHT HOSTILITY. HE ASKED "YOU MEAN YOU ARE LINKING THE BRIDGE TO THE CHANCERY QUESTION"? HE OBVIOUSLY WAS NOT AWARE OF THE LINKAGE, AND AS BECAME EVIDENT, NEITHER WAS HE AWARE OF MY MAY 5 MEETING WITH ALLADAYE NOR OF THE AIDE-MEMOIRE DELIVERED AT THAT MEETING.

3. I EXPLAINED TO ADJIN THAT WE NEEDED POSITIVE REPLIES SINCE WE HAD TO KNOW ABOUT OUR FUTURE IN THIS COUNTRY. IN VIEW OF THE LENGTH OF TIME REQUIRED TO OBTAIN CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL
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FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A CHANCERY, WE WISHED TO BE CERTAIN THAT

WE DID NOT FIND OURSELVES OUT IN THE STREET. THESE PROBLEMS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN WASHINGTON AND WITH HIS MINISTER.

4. ADJIN WOULD ONLY SAY THAT HE "HAS TAKEN NOTE" OF WHAT WAS SAID AND ABRUPTLY ENDED THE MEETING.

5. COMMENT: THE EVIDENT IGNORANCE ON THE PART OF THE NUMBER TWO MAN IN THE FORNMINISTRY IS NOTHING SHORT OF AMAZING. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT WAS A PUT-ON. HE HAD OBVOIOUSLY BEEN KPET OUT OF THE PICTURE BY HIS MINISTER. WE CAN ONLY THEORIZE AS TO THE REASON - (1) SHEER INEFFICIENCY, WHICH WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING, OR (2) ADJIN IS NOT ALLADAYE'S MAN AND IS THUS INTENTIONALLY CUT OUT. HE HAD BEEN DIRECTOR OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR UNDER CAPT MICHEL AIKPE AND WAS MOVED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THREE MONTHS AFTER AZONHIHO TOOK OVER INTERIOR.

6. IN VIEW OF ADJIN'S ATTITUDE AND POSSIBLE LACK OF STATUS WITHIN THE MINISTRY, I PLAN TO MAKE A FURTHER APPROACH TO DIR FOR WESTERN EUROPE/NORTH AMERICA, GNONLONFOUN WHO IS MUCH MORE IN THE PICTURE. IF THERE IS NO REPLY TO OUR NOTE WITHIN THREE OR FOUR DAYS, I WILL SEEK AN APPOINTMENT WITH ALLADAYE.
CHESHES

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